(c) whether any realistic assessment been made of the practicability of the new timings from the point of view of punctuality and staff convenience and if so, what are the result thereof; and

(d) whether Government propose to consider to revert back to the 6 day week?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI): (a) No serious complaint from, or any specific instance of inconvenience to, the general public has been brought to the notice of this Ministry.

(b) The increase in working hours by 30 minutes per day for the office staff of the Central Government with effect from 17-11-86 was not done to make up the deficiency arising out of granting one extra weekly holiday. The increase was effected after taking a decision in the light of 4th Pay Commission's Recommendations that the working hours of office staff in Central Government may be suitably increased.

(c) Before increase of working hours, the Government of India Administrative Offices were working for seven hours per day (including half an hour for lunch) within the limits prescribed for commencement and closure of offices, namely, 9.00 A.M. and 6.00 P.M. Even after increase in daily working hours by 30 minutes office timings have been adjusted within these limits.

(d) There is no such proposal at the moment.

Export and uprootment of rare herbs from Himalayas

3127. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many medicinal rare herbs found in the Himalayas are uprooted and exported;

(b) if so, whether Government have drawn up any plan to ensure that these herbs do not become extinct; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) There are some reports regarding exploitation of rare herbs found in Himalayas.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

2128. [*Transferred to the 3rd December*, 1986.]

Complaints of over and excessive charging by Telecommunications Department

3129. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the number of complaints against over or excessive billing by the Telecommunications Department received by Government during the first half of 1986 and what are the figures for the corresponding period in 1985; and

(b) what are the details of remedial action taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The number of complaints against over and excessive billing by the Telecommunications Department received by Government during the first half of 1986 is 42,702 and that for the corresponding period in 1985 is 41,446.

(b) The following steps are taken to reduce the incidence of over billing:

(1) To avoid clearical errors, instructions have already been issued to all the units to ensure proper care in billing and to rectify the mistakes if any, immediately and issue a revised bill to the subscribed wherever necessary. Moreover to eliminate mistakes in computation, the work of telephone billing and accounting has been computerised in the Metro districts of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras.

(2) As far as technical faults are concerned the following steps have been taken: